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**Konstantin Frank Vinifera Wine Cellars donates historic book collection to Cornell**

By Joe Ogradnick

Several Cornell libraries-the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station's Frank A. Lee Library in particular-are richer today. There is no dollar amount attached to this newfound wealth; this is instead the kind of gift that is quantified by volume-in this case, volumes-and consists of a collection of books donated by Dr. Konstantin Frank Vinifera Wine Cellars and the Frank family to Cornell University.

The majority of the 132 titles will be housed in Geneva. Those that don't quite fit into the Lee Library collection will be offered to various libraries on the Ithaca campus.

"We are thrilled about, and very grateful for, this generous gift to the library and pleased with how it complements our enology and viticulture collection," said Marty Schlabach, Lee Library director.

The collection is composed of 19th and 20th century titles on a wide variety of topics including horticulture, plant science, viticulture, enology, chemistry, nature, history and literature, with the largest single subject category being wine- and grape-related material. When Dr. Frank emigrated from Europe to the United States in 1951 at the age of 54, he sacrificed all other luggage to bring along his precious collection of books.

Of particular interest are a number of wine-appreciation titles signed by their authors to Dr. Frank. Also of special note are French and Russian ampelographies (ampelography is the identification and classification of grape vines) and a multi-volume history of horticulture in Russia. Researchers will no doubt be intrigued with the numerous handwritten notes that illustrate Dr. Frank's views on grape varieties and various vineyard practices.

The largest portion of the donation, the grape-growing and winemaking titles, will contribute greatly to the Lee Library's already impressive holdings in those areas. The Lee Library's viticulture and enology collection, reputed to be the finest east of the Rocky Mountains, consists of over 2,700 books and more than 40 current subscriptions to periodicals from around the world. Together with those in the larger Cornell library system, the total holdings in enology and viticulture exceed 7,000 titles.

Discussion of the Frank donation began in May 2007 when Mike Fordon, a public services assistant at the Lee Library, and Katherine Reagan and Evan Earle from Cornell University Library's Rare and Manuscript Collection traveled to Hammondsport, N.Y. to meet with Frank Winery representative Kitty Oliver and Fred Frank, grandson of the founder and president of the winery. They had gone there in part to conduct a survey of Dr. Frank's winery records for the Eastern Wine and Grape Archive.

Fordon pointed out that, while the collection contains many interesting and rare titles, its most significant aspect may be what it tells us about Frank. "He was quite fond of underlining certain passages in his books-mostly those that pointed out the number of hybrid grape varieties that were forbidden in Europe," he said. "He also seems to have used just about anything as a bookmark-money, letters, postcards, photos, hunting licenses and so on (one particularly interesting item is Frank's German fishing license from 1949). While processing books I removed a large quantity of ephemera, which will be used in a display later this month. It was exciting to find all this stuff while working with the collection."

Located on Keuka Lake a few miles north of Hammondsport, Dr. Konstantin Frank Vinifera Wine Cellars has long been associated with the New York wine revolution. Konstantin Frank helped pioneer the successful introduction of the European *vitis vinifera* grapevines in the eastern United States. For his contributions to the American wine industry, he was inducted into Wine Spectator's Hall of Fame in 2001.

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Marty Schlabach (left) and Michael Fordon (right) examine some of the materials from Frank book donation.

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